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RETAIL PRICES AND WAGE RATES, MARCH QUARTER 1968

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

Introduction

The Consumer Price Index measures quarterly, for each State Capital, the variations in prices of commodities and services as affecting a high proportion of the expenditure of wage-earner households. Commodities and services included in the index are food, clothing, drapery, home ownership, rent of privately owned and government owned houses, fuel, light, furniture, household appliances and supplies, fares, motoring, tobacco, cigarettes, beer, cinema, radio and television licences, newspapers, postal and telephone services, hairdressing, dry cleaning, and various other items.

The various commodities and services have been combined into groups, and group indexes are available for Food, Clothing and Drapery, Housing, Household Supplies and Equipment, and Miscellaneous.

The indexes measure price movements in each city individually. They do not provide a comparison of the retail price level in any city with the retail price level of any other city. The base of the index for each city and for the weighted average, six State Capitals, is year 1952-53 = 100.0. Group indexes also have separate bases for each group.

MARCH QUARTER 1968

There was an increase of 0.7 per cent in the Brisbane Consumer Price Index from December quarter 1967 to March quarter 1968, the index number for All Groups rising from 148.3 to 149.4. Compared with March quarter 1967, the All Groups increase was 3.5 per cent.

A brief outline of the movements of the various group indexes for Brisbane between December quarter 1967 and March quarter 1968 is shown below.

Food Group

The Food Group of the index increased from 157.6 to 160.5, an increase during the quarter of 1.8 per cent. Price increases were recorded for potatoes, onions, beef, and bread. There were only slight changes in other items of this group.

Clothing and Drapery Group

This group index rose 0.2 per cent from 126.6 to 126.9. Chief increases were in men's and women's clothing and footwear.

Housing Group

The Housing Group index rose from 171.8 to 172.4, an increase of 0.4 per cent. The rise was chiefly due to increased rent of private houses.

Household Supplies and Equipment Group

This group index showed an increase of 0.1 per cent, from 117.7 to 117.8.

Miscellaneous Group

The Miscellaneous Group showed a rise of 0.1 per cent. The index rose from 161.0 to 161.1.

From December quarter 1967 to March quarter 1968 the Consumer Price Index increased in all State Capitals with the exception of Hobart where it decreased by 0.4 per cent. Percentage increases were as follows: Brisbane, 0.7; Adelaide and Perth, 0.6; Melbourne, 0.5; and Sydney, 0.3.

Since the base year, 1952-53, the rise in the retail price level has been greatest in Brisbane and smallest in Adelaide. Percentage increases from 1952-53 to March quarter 1968 were as follows: Brisbane, 49.4; Hobart, 47.6; Melbourne, 46.0; Perth, 42.2; Sydney, 40.7; and Adelaide, 40.5. The rise in the weighted average for the six State Capitals was 43.5 per cent. (It should be noted that these figures merely indicate rates of price rises in separate cities and do not represent in any way the relativities of actual price levels in the different cities.)

COMMONWEALTH AND STATE WAGE RATES

Commonwealth and State wage rates are reviewed by the appropriate industrial authorities from time to time, and prevailing basic wage rates (which used to be determined in part by price movements) were shown in issues of this Bulletin up to March quarter 1967. In a decision given on 5 June 1967, the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission eliminated the separate concepts of basic wage and margins from its awards and removed any remaining link between the index numbers and Commonwealth wage rates. The Commission added \$1 per week to all wage rates for adult males and females prescribed under existing awards, the increases to operate from the first pay period commencing on or after 1 July 1967.

Following the Commonwealth wage judgment, the industrial authorities of the various States have granted wage increases to employees under their awards. In Queensland, the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission increased wage rates by \$1 per week by way of a "general ruling" which applied from 3 July 1967. In all other States likewise, excepting Western Australia, the increase applied was \$1 per week for adult males and adult females.

In Western Australia the minimum weekly wage payable to adult male workers under certain awards was increased by \$1 per week, and wage rates for adult males and females not in receipt of the minimum wage were increased by 60 cents per week, as from the beginning of the first pay period commencing on or after 1 July 1967.

In a majority decision dated 6 December 1967, the Queensland Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission refused an application by employees' organisations seeking an addition to the Queensland basic wage based on the movement of the Consumer Price Index. The Commission stated that, in view of the

increase of \$1 per week granted on economic grounds as from 3 July 1967, no further increase was justified. The Commission made it clear, however, that it had made no decision that it would not consider any application for a variation in the Queensland basic wage until after the Commonwealth Commission had made a further adjustment.

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20 May 1968

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Table 1 - Consumer Price Index: Total and Group Indexes, Brisbane
(Year 1952-53 = 100.0)

Period	Food	Clothing and Drapery	Housing	Household Supplies and Equipment	Miscellaneous	All Groups
<u>Year</u>						
1957-58	..	113.0	107.8	123.9	108.3	114.4
1958-59	..	119.8	109.4	128.4	109.0	118.2
1959-60	..	124.2	111.9	132.6	110.6	121.2
1960-61	..	130.4	115.1	137.6	111.3	125.4
1961-62	..	130.8	116.7	140.5	113.0	127.3
1962-63	..	129.8	117.0	144.0	112.8	127.7
1963-64	..	133.1	117.8	145.2	111.7	129.0
1964-65	..	141.5	119.5	149.0	112.7	133.9
1965-66	..	150.9	121.0	158.3	115.0	140.4
1966-67	..	153.5	123.7	162.8	116.5	144.0
<u>Quarter</u>						
1967: March	..	154.3	123.8	163.2	116.5	144.4
June	..	155.7	125.1	164.2	117.2	145.5
September		159.0	125.6	171.0	117.6	148.0
December		157.6	126.6	171.8	117.7	148.3
1968: March	..	160.5	126.9	172.4	117.8	149.4

Percentage Increase or Decrease (-) on Previous Quarter

Quarter						
1967: March	..	1.0	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.6
June	..	0.9	1.1	0.6	0.6	0.8
September		2.1	0.4	4.1	0.3	1.7
December		-0.9	0.8	0.5	0.1	0.2
1968: March	..	1.8	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.7

Table 2 - Consumer Price Index: State Capital Cities
 (Year 1952-53 = 100.0 for Each City and for Six State Capitals)

As the base for each city is 100.0, the indexes in the table below do not indicate relative price levels as between cities, but they may be used to compare relative price movements in the various cities.

Period	Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Adelaide	Perth	Hobart	Weighted Average Six State Capitals
<u>Year</u>							
1957-58 ..	114.5	114.4	114.4	111.9	113.6	117.0	114.2
1958-59 ..	115.3	116.6	118.2	114.5	114.7	118.7	116.0
1959-60 ..	117.8	120.0	121.2	118.0	116.9	120.8	118.9
1960-61 ..	122.1	125.9	125.4	122.9	121.2	127.5	123.8
1961-62 ..	122.6	126.3	127.3	122.5	121.6	128.1	124.3
1962-63 ..	123.2	126.2	127.7	122.1	122.2	128.0	124.5
1963-64 ..	124.5	127.1	129.0	123.5	123.8	129.4	125.7
1964-65 ..	128.8	132.2	133.9	128.6	127.6	133.6	130.4
1965-66 ..	133.1	137.1	140.4	132.7	132.5	138.3	135.2
1966-67 ..	136.3	140.7	144.0	136.9	137.9	141.2	138.8
<u>Quarter</u>							
1967: March ..	136.4	140.7	144.4	137.2	138.3	142.0	138.9
June ..	137.8	142.9	145.5	138.9	140.1	143.3	140.6
September ..	139.7	144.8	148.0	140.5	140.7	147.2	142.5
December ..	140.3	145.3	148.3	139.7	141.3	148.2	142.9
1968: March ..	140.7	146.0	149.4	140.5	142.2	147.6	143.5

Table 3 - Average Retail Prices: Food, Brisbane

Item	Unit	Year	Month		
		1967	Jan. 1968	Feb. 1968	Mar. 1968
<u>Cereal Products</u>			Cents	Cents	Cents
Bread, white (unwrapped and delivered) ..	2 lb loaf	16.7	18.0	18.0	18.0
Flour, plain ..	2 lb pkt	13.5	13.9	14.0	13.7
Flour, self-raising ..	2 lb pkt	16.2	16.2	16.6	16.6
Biscuits, wheatmeal ..	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb pkt	16.1	17.0	16.7	16.6
Biscuits, milk arrowroot ..	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb pkt	17.0	17.4	17.4	16.5
Biscuits, dry ..	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb pkt	17.5	17.5	17.9	16.9
Oats, rolled ..	2 lb pkt	38.3	38.4	40.0	41.6
Rice ..	1 lb pkt	13.4	13.7	13.7	13.6
<u>Dairy Produce</u>					
Milk, fresh (bottled, delivered) ..	1 quart	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0
Milk, powdered ..	12 oz tin	38.4	38.9	39.8	38.0
Milk, condensed ..	14 oz tin	21.3	22.5	22.4	22.6
Cheese, cheddar, matured ..	8 oz pkt	32.4	32.6	32.6	32.6
Cheese, cheddar, processed ..	8 oz pkt	25.1	24.3	24.6	24.4
Butter ..	1 lb	51.0	50.8	50.7	50.8
Eggs (24 oz, in carton) ..	dozen	61.1	57.7	60.3	56.8

Table 3 - Average Retail Prices: Food, Brisbane (continued)

Item	Unit	Year	Month		
			1967	Jan. 1968	Feb. 1968
<u>Fruit and Vegetables</u>		Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
Peaches, canned ..	.. 29 oz tin	30.6	30.4	30.3	30.8
Pears, canned ..	.. 29 oz tin	30.8	30.4	30.3	30.8
Sultanas ..	.. 1 lb pkt	34.9	35.5	35.8	36.0
Peas, green, canned ..	.. 15½ oz tin	22.3	21.7	21.1	20.8
Peas, frozen ..	.. 10 oz pkt	28.4	27.0	26.8	26.8
Potatoes ..	.. 7 lb	44.4	72.6	55.0	46.6
Onions ..	.. 1 lb	8.5	15.0	13.8	12.9
<u>Beverages</u>					
Tea ..	.. ½ lb pkt	30.9	30.8	30.7	30.4
Coffee, instant ..	.. 2 oz jar	45.1	44.3	44.3	40.3
Cocoa ..	.. 8 oz pkt	31.6	32.0	32.4	32.4
<u>Other Food (excluding meat)</u>					
Sugar ..	.. 4 lb pkt	40.4	42.9	42.7	42.2
Jam, plum ..	.. 1½ lb tin	24.4	24.2	23.6	24.1
Jam, marmalade ..	.. 1½ lb tin	27.4	27.7	27.9	27.7
Honey, liquid ..	.. 16 oz jar	27.4	27.2	27.2	26.7
Peanut Paste ..	.. 4 oz jar	18.3	18.3	18.7	18.7
Beans, baked, canned ..	.. 16 oz tin	16.8	15.8	15.8	15.0
Spaghetti, canned ..	.. 16 oz tin	16.8	15.8	15.8	15.0
Margarine, table ..	.. ½ lb	19.1	19.1	19.1	19.1
Sauce, tomato ..	.. 10 oz bottle	22.5	22.2	21.8	22.8
Pickles, mustard ..	.. 10 oz jar	24.2	24.5	24.5	24.2
Sardines, Norwegian ..	.. 3¾ oz tin	16.0	16.2	16.2	16.0
Salmon, Australian, canned ..	.. 16 oz tin	42.7	42.8	42.8	42.8
Soup, tomato ..	.. 16 oz tin	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.5

Quarter Ended
March 1968

<u>Meat</u>				
Beef, sirloin, roast ..	.. 1 lb	57.8	59.4	
" , rib, roast (without bone) ..	.. 1 lb	50.4	51.4	
" , steak, rump ..	.. 1 lb	77.1	77.7	
" , steak, chuck ..	.. 1 lb	47.9	48.3	
" , steak, blade ..	.. 1 lb	57.5	57.8	
" , sausages ..	.. 1 lb	26.6	27.1	
" , silverside, corned ..	.. 1 lb	53.6	54.9	
" , brisket, corned ..	.. 1 lb	40.7	41.4	
Mutton, leg ..	.. 1 lb	34.6	34.8	
" , shoulder ..	.. 1 lb	21.3	21.5	
" , chops, loin ..	.. 1 lb	34.3	33.5	
" , chops, leg ..	.. 1 lb	34.7	34.5	
Lamb, leg ..	.. 1 lb	50.6	50.7	
" , shoulder ..	.. 1 lb	31.2	31.7	
" , chops, loin ..	.. 1 lb	53.0	54.6	
" , chops, leg ..	.. 1 lb	52.5	54.1	
Pork, leg ..	.. 1 lb	61.0	62.5	
" , loin ..	.. 1 lb	60.8	61.6	
" , chops ..	.. 1 lb	61.2	62.1	
Bacon, rashers, pre-packed ..	½ lb	51.0	53.3	

